

INCLUSIVE FUTURE GROWTH IN ENGLAND'S CITIES AND REGIONS

REALISING THE
TRANSFORMATIONAL
UNIVERSITY DIVIDENDS

David Marlow, Louise Kempton
and Mark Tewdwr-Jones

August 2019



Insights for policy
makers, local leadership
teams and universities
from a review of eight
English places

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INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

This report presents the results of a lesson-learning review into the impact of the Urban Living Partnership (ULP) pilot programme in five places – Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, NewcastleGateshead and York – together with three comparator case studies – Keele, Lincoln and Plymouth. It explores the contribution universities have made to inclusive future growth in their local city and its hinterland.

This review is both significant and timely because there is much ongoing work and expectations of university participation in place-based policies and programmes. It builds directly on the February 2019 Civic University Commission report into university-place relations. It informs the design and development of strategies and programmes specifically designed for place-based growth and development – notably the impending delivery of Local Industrial Strategies and the roll out of the Shared Prosperity, Stronger Towns and Strength in Places Funds. It recognises universities and other higher education institutions (HEIs) also make significant contributions to the wider economic, social and environmental policies and strategies in the area where they are located.

Our overall aim is to translate the lessons from the eight case studies reviewed to help shape better university involvement in place as local leadership teams and their partners navigate these policies and programmes.



HEADLINE FINDINGS

Our overarching conclusion is that there is a coherent, broad-based menu of interventions that places need from their universities if they are to progress inclusive future growth effectively. However the current way anchor institution and civic university collaboration is being understood will not deliver this. Our five key findings are:

1 Instead of asking the traditional civic university question – i.e. ‘what can universities **do** for their place?’ ask ‘what do places **need** from their universities?’ It is the local leadership team that should set the collaborative agendas (to suit its configuration of universities and key partners) rather than a specific university defining the agenda itself.

2 Context is important on three levels; **the nature of the place, the forms and functions of local governance, and the characteristics of the local higher education configuration.** Nationally prescriptive, place-blind strategies founded on world views of clear civic leadership working with a single large full-service university anchor apply almost nowhere in England and therefore will inevitably be sub-optimal. Civic university agendas must be shaped by the opportunities and challenges of the place and how city-led, polycentric or non-metropolitan it is; by the degree to which local governance is aligned or contested; and by the number and character of universities across the relevant geography.

- 3 **There is a coherent menu of intervention strategies that universities are particularly well-placed to lead and manage that can provide key foundations for purposeful, inclusive, future place-based growth and management of change.** Universities can enable the visioning, knowledge aggregation, design and appraisal, the neutral safe spaces for deliberative exchange, testbeds for experimental and pilot projects, and contributions to local leadership teams that create a coherent, cohesive inclusive future places eco-system for their geography.
- 4 **These interventions will be strengthened if large, full-service, research-intensive anchors welcome and encourage smaller HEIs and/or their own arms-length entities to engage consistently in local leadership and management.** The risk of anchor institution and civic university orthodoxy is that the university is (or is seen to be) part of an incumbent local elite, determining the allocations of national and local assets and resources

opaquely among themselves, rather than the university acting as an honest broker for challenge and change. Encouraging more diverse models of local leadership 'top tables' can help to address this.

- 5 **There is a strong case for a bespoke national programme to deepen and develop these findings across a wider cross-section of places.** This will deliver much more focused, context-specific and consistent university contributions to inclusive future growth eco-systems and place leadership. It will, for relatively modest cost, complement and add real value to the development of Local Industrial Strategies and other place-based programmes without which university engagement will be sub-optimal and erratic.



WE RECOMMEND...



WE RECOMMEND GOVERNMENT

supports a medium-term, medium resourced Urban Living Partnership pilot successor programme. This should build on the pilot programme lessons, but also test and develop our Urban Living Framework across broader configurations of universities in metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas.



WE RECOMMEND UNIVERSITIES

consider the insights presented here in shaping development of Civic University Agreements, their involvement in Local Industrial Strategies and how they deliver place-based impacts. They should do this as part of a cohort of Higher Education Institutions in their local, sub-regional and/or regional geographies eschewing institutional silos both within the university, between them, and across the place's institutional configurations beyond traditional anchors.



WE RECOMMEND LOCAL LEADERSHIP TEAMS

digest the findings of this review before finalising compact or agreements with their universities. They may wish to use the Urban Living Framework presented in this document to ensure the optimal contribution of all their universities in design and delivery of place-based policies and programmes.

CONTEXT AND WHY THIS MATTERS

All places in England are being tested by the agendas of managing grand societal challenges, disruptive economic transformation, Brexit and the volatility created by its as yet uncertain implications for the economy and society in general. They are meeting these tests in a context where, amongst advanced countries, the UK has enduringly extreme place-based differentials in performance and outcomes within a comparatively highly centralised system of political leadership and administration.



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CONTEXT AND WHY THIS MATTERS

How can ambitious places – cities, city/sub-regions, or regions – meet these challenges?

One of the major responses proffered by national and sub-national policy makers is that places should make better use of the assets and capabilities of their local universities.

Universities – large and small, full-service and specialist – have the potential, and are increasingly expected, to be proactive drivers of inclusive growth and development in the places in which they are located. They are often one of the largest institutional anchors particularly in lagging cities and regions. They are arguably less prone to political volatility than other public policy anchors, particularly and they contain a portfolio of expertise across a breadth of

academic areas.

A considerable amount of work has already gone into how to improve university collaboration and impact locally – from Government reviews (e.g. Wilson, Witty), to independent inquiries (e.g. Civic University Commission), to initiatives by individual universities themselves (e.g. Warwick Chancellor's Commission). Indeed, the recent Civic University Commission report proposed a generation of 'Civic University Agreements' to propel new models and arrangements to capture and harvest local university dividends for place-based inclusive future growth. Over 50 universities to date have responded enthusiastically to the report, signalling an intention to progress an agreement.

Yet, evidence suggests the track record of university 'civic-ness' is highly inconsistent.


Alongside some impressive evidence of transformational impact are swathes of instrumental engagement (i.e. when there is something the university wants locally) and sometimes indifferent place-blindness.

If ambitious places want to consistently optimise university impact, what do they have to do? And how can the 50+ signatories (and those not yet formally committed) respond?

The insights presented in this report are based on a review of eight cases. We believe they provide insights and practical steps that can be taken to answer these questions – increasing university dividends for place-based inclusive future growth, and managing change more generally, in this most uncertain of periods.

THE GENESIS & PURPOSES OF THE REVIEW

The origins of this review arose from a 2017 exercise in Plymouth undertaken by Plymouth College of Art (PCA). PCA is a small specialist HEI whose intense civic engagement is largely outside formal city-leadership structures which are expected to 'host' anchor institution collaboration. The PCA case takes a provocative approach to anchor institution orthodoxy, suggesting that civic university practice is too often instrumental for the university itself rather than purposeful for the place that receives it.

A large, multi-layered stone archway made of rough-hewn blocks. Through the arch, a street scene is visible, featuring a row of red brick buildings with white window frames. Several cars are parked or moving on the street. A traffic light is visible on the left side of the street. The scene is captured in bright daylight.

...civic university practice is too often instrumental for the university itself rather than purposeful for the place that receives it.

THE GENESIS AND PURPOSES OF THE REVIEW

The UKRI funded Urban Living Partnership (ULP) pilot aimed to “harness UK research and innovation strength to help cities realise a vision of healthy, prosperous and sustainable living.” The ULP pilot programmes provided a vehicle for preliminary investigation into how university-led consortia can promote innovation that progresses the challenges of delivering inclusive ‘future city’ growth. Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, Newcastle and York were selected as the five pilots, led by these cities’ Russell Group universities*.

The application of the PCA provocation to the ULPs looked explicitly at actions undertaken by the pilot programme in each of the cities, rather than considering the overall impact of each University as a whole. The final two cases extended this analysis to two ‘full-service’ non-metropolitan, non-Russell

Group HEIs – Keele and Lincoln – to allow comparative analysis from a different place and higher education context. Like PCA, these are (high-level) whole-institution cases.

The analysis had three broad aims:

- To understand how English ‘places’ can make the most of their universities in addressing current and future challenges
- To provide evidenced insight into what types of universities in what types of places are more likely to act as positive radical place-transformers in delivering inclusive growth agendas
- To inform the ongoing design and development of Local Industrial Strategies and other place-based policies and funding programmes such as UKRI’s Strength in

Places, the Shared Prosperity and the recently announced Stronger Towns Funds.

Desk research and field visits were undertaken to each of the universities and their local geographies for interviews and discussions with eight universities themselves, local enterprise partnerships, local authorities, industry and third sector organisations. Whilst the insights and analysis discussed in this review focuses on the eight case studies, and notes the striking differences between them, we consider there are significant general findings for the wider English and even UK university sector. There is also considerable international interest in understanding how to galvanise universities for local and regional development for which these findings may also have relevance and application.

* A membership group of the 24 UK universities that regard themselves as world leading.

There are over 130 publicly funded higher education institutions (HEIs) in England with more than 2.3 million students, 200,000 academic staff, over 400,000 staff in total and income in excess of £33 billion per annum. There is huge variety of size, scope and character within the sector. Average annual income per HEI is over £200m, but around 20 institutions generate less than £25 million each while four generate more than £1 billion.

The average size in terms of student enrolment is around 14,000. However this ranges from just over 40,000 at Manchester to smaller, often discipline specific, specialists with fewer than 1,000. The character of universities varies from globally orientated research-intensive through to newer teaching or technical-oriented to small specialists. Moreover, there is a (currently) small private university sector which Government policy is seeking to grow rapidly and aggressively as a challenge to the domination of publicly supported HEIs.

This review presents lessons from eight HEI cases in places with, in total, well over 20 HEIs in their city-region geographies. The places are a mix of metropolitan cities, non-metropolitan cities and smaller cities with rural hinterland. The five ULPs are research intensive, globally orientated universities. Keele, Lincoln and PCA provide interesting comparators. However we acknowledge the eight places and their HEIs are not the whole England story, hence our recommendation for a successor to the ULP to test the model across a wider range of geographies and contexts.

In terms of London, as the UK's only 'world city', the city's HEI and inclusive future growth eco-system is particularly complex and unique. Similarly the devolved nations of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland which have devolved responsibilities for higher education policy are distinctive from the English cases. However, with these caveats, we consider the lessons from this exercise may be useful for places throughout the UK, but particularly for the 37 English Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) outside

London tasked with negotiating and delivering Local Industrial Strategies (LIS).

The exercise presents **five principal insights** and recommendations for policy makers, local leadership teams, and their universities.

THERE ARE OVER 130 PUBLICLY FUNDED HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS (HEIS) IN ENGLAND WITH MORE THAN 2.3 MILLION STUDENTS, 200,000 ACADEMIC STAFF, OVER 400,000 STAFF IN TOTAL AND INCOME IN EXCESS OF £33 BILLION PER YEAR.

INSIGHT #1

INSTEAD OF ASKING THE TRADITIONAL CIVIC UNIVERSITY QUESTION — I.E. ‘WHAT CAN UNIVERSITIES DO FOR THEIR PLACE?’ ASK ‘WHAT DO PLACES NEED FROM THEIR UNIVERSITIES?’

There is a lot of evidence of civic excellence and positive local outcomes in many universities’ activities and (usually self-commissioned) institutional impact analyses. But, too often, these amount to a portfolio of individual interventions rather than a coherent place-based agenda co-designed and agreed with diverse, inclusive place-leadership teams.

Across the eight case studies, there is a lot of good civic activity going on and positive impacts being achieved. Each of them demonstrates passion for the places in which their footprint is most prominent and for deploying their scale, assets and capabilities to address key challenges their places are facing. Each of them can also contribute specific and adaptable good practice for evolving civic agendas for the 2020s and beyond.

However, arguably none of them exemplifies a fully-formed, place-based ‘inclusive future growth’ eco-system – either within the university itself, or across city and sub-regional geography – commensurate with the depth and breadth of challenges their places are facing. This was also a key finding of the Civic University Commission.

Our review looked at what specific places require from their university sector in pursuit of inclusive future growth. The analysis suggests the key ingredients of an inclusive future growth ecosystem, and how future place-based programmes might enable and support this. These are elaborated further in insight #3. But the key prerequisite for realising this requires ‘flipping’ the question of ‘what can universities **do** for their place’ to ‘what do

places **need** from their universities'. Only by doing this can the lessons from this analysis be relevant, adaptable and scalable.

Recent exercises like the Civic University Commission are helpful. It has stimulated a renewed interest in local compacts or 'Civic University Agreements' between anchor institutions. Our analysis, though, suggests that any Civic University Agreement whose starting point is the institutional perspective of individual universities – as opposed to the place as a multi-university and/or multi-institution eco-system – is inevitably going to be sub-optimal.

We wish to see more local leadership teams – LEP, Mayoral Combined Authority, City/County Growth Board, or even places in London and the devolved nations, leading and commissioning their own Civic University Agreements (or whatever they regard as the appropriate form for university contributions to their places) with the relevant consortium of HEIs and partners. Are these teams up for that challenge and will their local HEIs enable and support it?

ACROSS THE EIGHT CASE STUDIES THERE IS A LOT OF GOOD CIVIC ACTIVITY GOING ON AND POSITIVE IMPACTS BEING ACHIEVED. EACH OF THEM DEMONSTRATES PASSION FOR THE PLACES IN WHICH THEIR FOOTPRINT IS MOST PROMINENT AND FOR DEPLOYING THEIR SCALE, ASSETS AND CAPABILITIES TO ADDRESS KEY CHALLENGES THEIR PLACES ARE FACING.



INSIGHT #2

CONTEXT IS IMPORTANT ON THREE LEVELS; THE NATURE OF THE PLACE, THE FORMS AND FUNCTIONS OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE, AND THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LOCAL HIGHER EDUCATION CONFIGURATION.

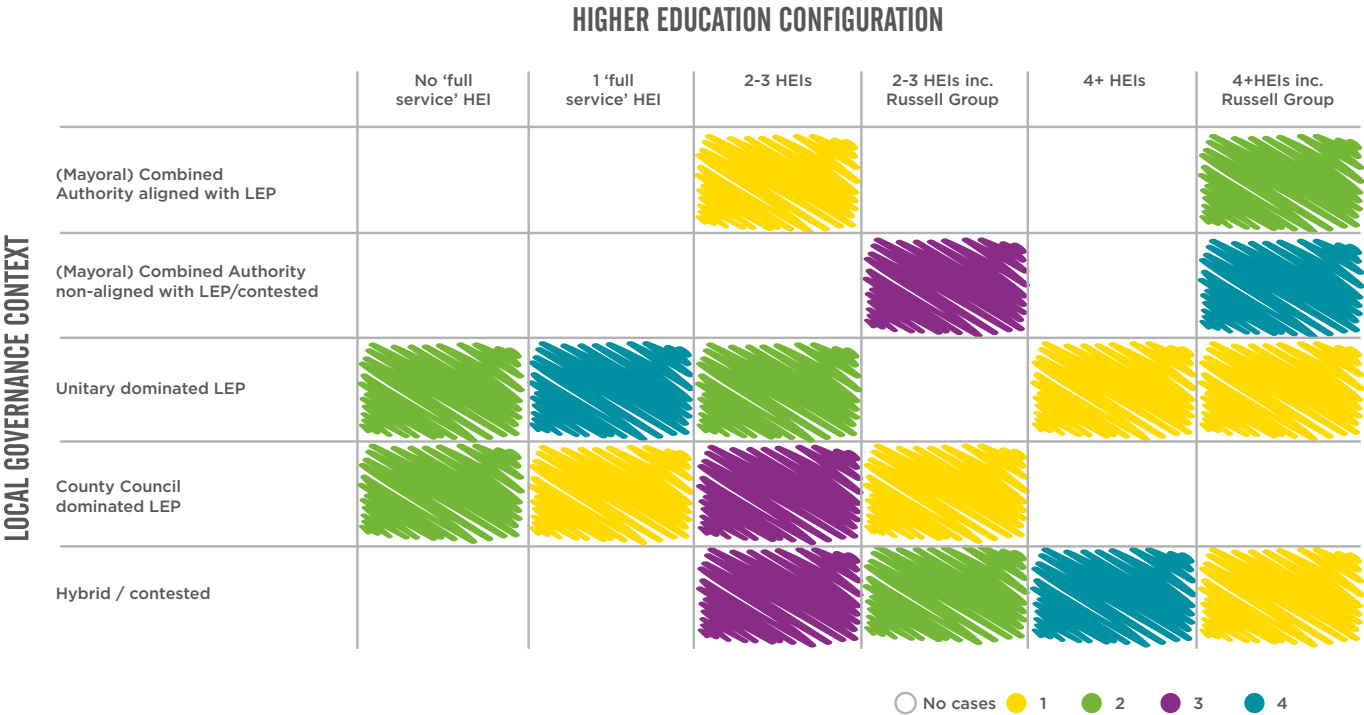
Effective strategies for inclusive future growth will need to be adapted and shaped according to the type of place for which the strategy is being developed, and for the number, size and character of universities participating in their interventions. The orthodoxy of the single university in the metro is NOT the norm, as shown in the analysis of higher education configurations and local governance context illustrated in figure 1.

In terms of the context of the places reviewed in our study, Bristol is probably the most economically successful city. It has both a city council mayor and a metro-mayoral combined authority. It has two large full-service universities within the city – both city centre and suburban – with two further smaller HEIs within the wider area in Bath. Self-evidently it will seek and need

a different relationship with its universities to a smaller successful northern city like York, with its positioning within the Leeds city region. Likewise Birmingham, Leeds, Newcastle, Plymouth and Lincoln all face widely differing contexts in managing the interfaces with their universities.

We identified six categories of higher education configuration, from no ‘full service’ (i.e. a student body in excess of 10,000 and research and teaching activities covering a range of STEM and arts, humanities and social science subjects) HEI to multiple HEIs with a range of characteristics and origins (small and specialist, former polytechnic and research intensive). Presence of a Russell Group university was assessed as a separate category given the global reach of these institutions, the scale of external research

Figure 1: Operating context of HE and local governance England



funds they attract and their (perceived) importance to their local business and innovation eco-system by policy makers.

Looking at the 37 English LEP areas (excluding London) we found five broad categories of local governance within which they operate, from relatively coherent and aligned governance arrangements to places where governance remains unresolved or contested.

We found 17 distinct classifications of HE and local governance operating contexts across the 37 LEP areas. Only five of these apply to more than two areas, and none apply to more than four. Therefore strategy frameworks and policy instruments that rely on a uniform understanding of local conditions are misguided and unlikely to deliver the impacts they seek. Similarly this analysis suggests that highlighting and seeking to duplicate case studies of 'success' or 'best practice' from one place to another is a fundamentally flawed, and probably futile, exercise.

Within most places, a presumption of effective, cohesive civic leadership can be problematic and contested. As our review found, the range of governance contexts at subnational level affects the way universities and their local leadership teams can and do interact. The impacts of these for developing strategies for inclusive future growth needs to be understood by all local actors, including universities themselves. For instance, a strong Mayoral Combined Authority overseeing a coherent functional city region will be able to support a different type of agenda to a much more contested geography with city-county-district layers of local governance, competing world views and, in some cases deep-seated historic and animosities.

A similar point can be made about the institutional density in the local ecosystem. Where a place has a rich array of anchor institutions (including business) the demands placed on even 'high performing' (as defined by national and international rankings and league table) universities will be less intense than in places where the university (irrespective of its performance) is effectively the 'only game in town'.

The review surfaced many of these tensions, and it is not apposite to air these in this publication. However, if our recommendation for a ULP-style successor programme is pursued, there must be a challenge to both place leadership teams and to their universities to consider and explain how they will tackle issues of, and operate in, a context of contested local leadership and governance.

Our review demonstrates that nationally prescriptive, place-blind strategies founded on world views of clear civic leadership working with a single large full-service university anchor are inaccurate. Strategies designed for those types of places are as likely to exacerbate the problems they are trying to address as solve them! As we stated previously, our eight cases have well over 20 HEIs across their geographies. Involving universities in future growth strategies must be configured in a way that finds the win-wins of civic-HEI collaboration rather than be a zero-sum game where one or a few highly selective universities are included to the exclusion of others with something to offer inclusive city/places growth.

**OUR REVIEW DEMONSTRATES THAT
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AS SOLVE THEM!**

INSIGHT #3

THERE IS A COHERENT MENU OF INTERVENTION STRATEGIES THAT UNIVERSITIES ARE PARTICULARLY WELL-PLACED TO LEAD AND MANAGE THAT CAN PROVIDE KEY FOUNDATIONS FOR PURPOSEFUL, INCLUSIVE FUTURE PLACES GROWTH AND MANAGEMENT OF TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE

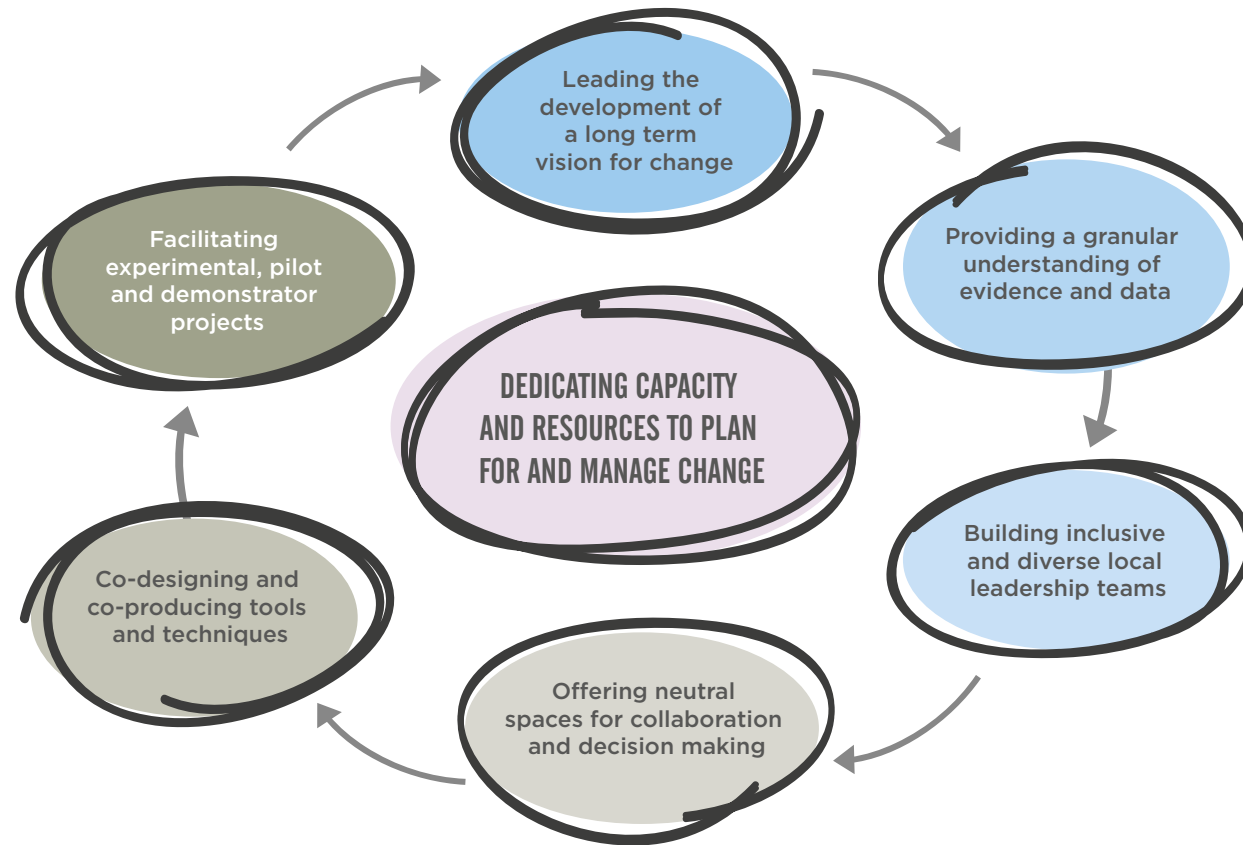
Our review suggests that university involvement in effective inclusive future growth requires one important precondition, and six underpinning design principles in order to maximise the contribution of local universities.

Fundamentally, there must be a genuine commitment on the part of each university at an institutional level to dedicate capacity and resources to planning for and managing change locally. How they do this is also important (see Insight #4).

The design principles for inclusive future places growth are summarised in the Urban Living Framework shown in figure 2. While they do not necessarily need to be followed sequentially, our review suggests an understanding of how each step builds on the previous, and reinforces the next, set of activities can lead to improved outcomes and impact.



Figure 2: The Urban Living Framework



The Urban Living Framework shown in figure 2 outlines some potential contributions universities can make against each of these principles, and it provides examples of how the universities that took part in the review are delivering against these in their local areas. (Note that this is just for illustrative purposes and represents only a very small part of the contribution and impact these institutions have locally).

Ambitious places seeking transformational change need a well-founded vision; consistent use of evidence and analysis; by an inclusive, diverse leadership team; which can discuss and resolve ‘wicked issues’ in a neutral space/setting; with genuinely inclusive co-production techniques deployed to design, test, and deliver major interventions. Universities can potentially enable and support all these key roles.

Rollover the diagram on the left to view the potential contributions and illustrative examples for each underpinning design principle

INSIGHT #4

THESE INTERVENTIONS WILL BE SIGNIFICANTLY STRENGTHENED IF LARGE, FULL-SERVICE, RESEARCH-INTENSIVE ANCHORS WELCOME AND ENCOURAGE SMALLER DISRUPTIVE HEIS AND/OR THEIR OWN ARMS-LENGTH INITIATIVES TO ENGAGE CONSISTENTLY IN LOCAL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF CHANGE.

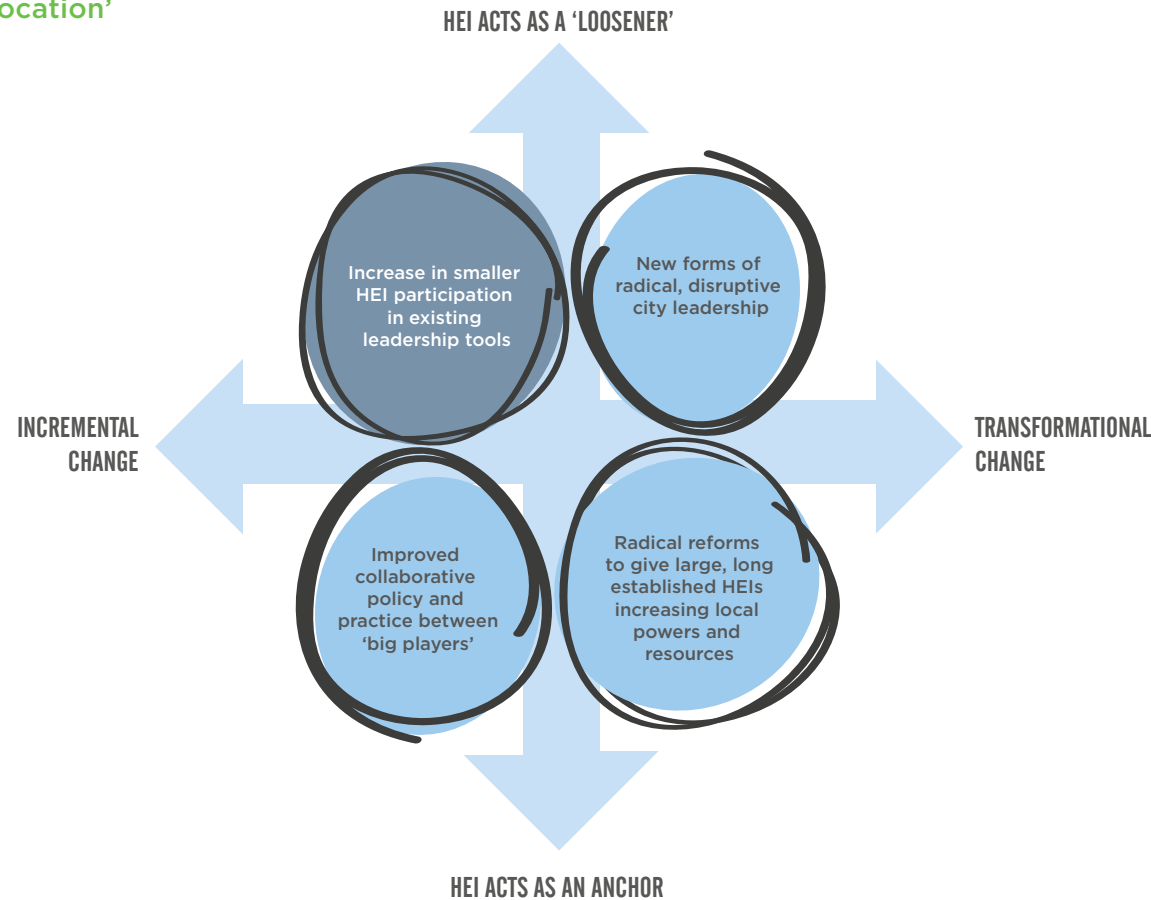
This is perhaps the most challenging insight for local leadership teams and their current university members. One of the major weaknesses of existing anchor institution and civic university models is the assumption that university-place collaboration is a normative 'good'.

Even where university-place collaboration is deep and broad, with universities branding themselves civic and integral to local leadership, there is a risk this increases perception of universities as part of an incumbent local elite. Partnership arrangements based on opaque deals for the allocation of state resources and local assets amongst themselves is conducive to neither social innovation nor future places' dynamism. It also runs against the social value ethos that underpins most universities' establishment and their core institutional purposes. The review found that much of the challenge, dynamism and innovation necessary to adopt game-changing inclusive future

growth intervention strategies rests with arms-length entities within larger HEIs – of which Newcastle City Futures or Birmingham's City-REDI are examples. The review also surfaced the potential of smaller specialist HEIs – like PCA in Plymouth – to offer valuable, even disruptive, challenge and radical delivery of change. A third potential 'challenger' model is for universities to support community anchors – such as the type of relationship Bristol University has developed with Knowle West Media Centre.

Cities and sub-regions need to make the most of large anchor institutions for obvious reasons. But they should also understand, welcome and involve what we term 'loosener' institutions – smaller, sometimes disruptive, challengers to the anchor status quo. These can be equally passionate about and committed to place – but more agile and flexible in experimenting and demonstrating new approaches.

Figure 3: The 'Plymouth Provocation'



We have termed this the 'Plymouth Provocation' based on the initial 2017 Plymouth case study. This contrasted the Plymouth College of Art 'loosener' roles in the city with the more traditional anchor roles of the much larger Plymouth University.

The hypothesis is that national policies and local attention gravitates towards the bottom left-hand quadrant of the matrix - the important task of increasing anchor institution collaboration and making it more effective. In fact, one might characterise the selection of five Russell Group HEIs as leaders of the Urban Living Partnership pilots as epitomising a 'safe' civic university orthodoxy world view.

However, many places will require transformation and disruptive change to successfully navigate the coming period - the local 'shocks' of Brexit will almost certainly trigger this. They may need new types of institutions in leadership and delivery roles - i.e. the top-left quadrant of the matrix.

It is likely that places will need their large universities to take on new roles and responsibilities locally. In terms of the Urban Living Framework, perhaps the

observatory, policy development, or co-design and production roles outlined in insight#3. But more generally, there are also increasing pressures for universities to take responsibility for the delivery of services that have traditionally been managed by the public sector, such as libraries, cultural and sporting venues and even, in some cases, public transport. This is depicted in the bottom-right quadrant of figure 3.

In some places there may even be an appetite to scale up some of the results and forms of radical disruptive challenge in decision and policy-making forums. There were some examples of this in the cases reviewed, although the participants did not always – for obvious tactical reasons – present them as such.

This review suggests that ambitious places developing their inclusive future growth strategies need to at least consider how their place can leverage the talents, energy and capabilities in all four quadrants of the Plymouth Provocation matrix.

Universities are particularly well-placed to facilitate and even support this, and indeed we argue that it is in their long-term best interest if they are to counter the ‘local incumbent elite’ charge.

Large university anchors themselves will not be able to ride out the current turmoil without serious reflection on their local purposes, priorities, and the business models through which they deliver them. For the university itself – as the ULPs, Keele, Lincoln, and PCA demonstrate – there is the potential to do work in and across all four quadrants

THIS REVIEW SUGGESTS THAT AMBITIOUS PLACES DEVELOPING THEIR INCLUSIVE FUTURE GROWTH STRATEGIES NEED TO AT LEAST CONSIDER HOW THEIR PLACE CAN LEVERAGE THE TALENTS, ENERGY AND CAPABILITIES IN ALL FOUR QUADRANTS OF THE PLYMOUTH PROVOCATION MATRIX.



INSIGHT #5

THERE IS A STRONG CASE FOR A NATIONAL PROGRAMME TO DEEPEN AND DEVELOP THESE FINDINGS ACROSS A WIDER CROSS-SECTION OF PLACES.

The national and global drivers of university institutional development are much more significant than place-based drivers and are likely to remain so for the foreseeable future.

The national and global drivers of university institutional development are much more significant than place-based drivers and are likely to remain so for the foreseeable future. Government can, however, incentivise better university contributions to inclusive future growth policy and practice in a wider set of places by building any successor programmes on the lessons and principles from this review.

We suggest there is a strong case for a ULP-style second phase programme to build continuity and momentum from the pilots. However, to be effective any follow-on programme should be viewed as medium term (5-10 years) with significant pump-priming (£5-£10m per pilot). It should also explicitly seek synergies and alignment with Local Industrial Strategies, Shared Prosperity Fund proposals, and other place-based programmes to ensure its impact has

more chance of scale-up, longevity and ultimately mainstreaming.

In order to ensure that any new programme maximises the contribution and value of universities to place-based, inclusive future growth we propose the following underpinning principles:

- 1 Reduce academic silos by insisting on **trans-disciplinary and co-production operating models, with shared leadership and governance institutional arrangements** (outside individual university schools and including all relevant HEIs and other key anchors). Where possible consider placing programme funding and accountability in a shared leadership and governance entity, rather than as part of mainstream university research funding structures and processes.

- 2 Where appropriate to the place, prioritise partnerships which proactively include **cohorts of HEIs from diverse mission groups** who have complementary specific niches and synergistic roles.
- 3 Link programmes explicitly into **evolution of place-based leadership architecture** and ongoing public service reform and change programmes.
- 4 Require proposals to include (or justify the exclusion of) the core elements of **the Urban Living Framework** in figure 2.
- 5 Positively weight proposals that **prioritise left-behind communities' involvement** and reduce town-gown divides – even in more successful cities and sub-regions – and ensure a mix of **non-metropolitan sub-regions as well as metropolitan cities**.
- 6 Enable much **stronger learning between and across places** by establishing a co-ordinating central hub and networking resource.

Whilst there may be some antipathy towards the recommendation of yet another place-based programme, the review findings reveal that existing and impending interventions will not be sufficient to cover this terrain. Moreover, the review tends to confirm the depth and breadth of university roles – including the extent to which they assume leadership functions – increases with the level of institutional thinness and socio-economic underperformance of the place in which they are located. The scale and scope of university roles are likely to be positively correlated with the level of challenge and change in the place and the extent to which its leadership is contested and/or dysfunctional. The existing portfolio of strategies and programmes will be significantly strengthened by a ULP second phase in the following ways:

It will provide a starting point of **improving place-based leadership and university contributions** to it. Typically, other strategies focus on accelerating and commercialising research and stimulating innovation (e.g. Strength in Places, mainstream UKRI programmes), industrial

growth (e.g. Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund) or tackling underperformance (e.g. Shared Prosperity Fund). This report focuses on the glue and spaces between that will make these larger interventions work better.

It will ensure **better-founded, shared place-based visions and strategic prioritisation processes** which capitalise on relevant academic rigour and excellence. These tend not to be the purpose of time-limited functional funding programmes mentioned above, but would provide the coherent underpinning for making the short-term funding rounds more strategic

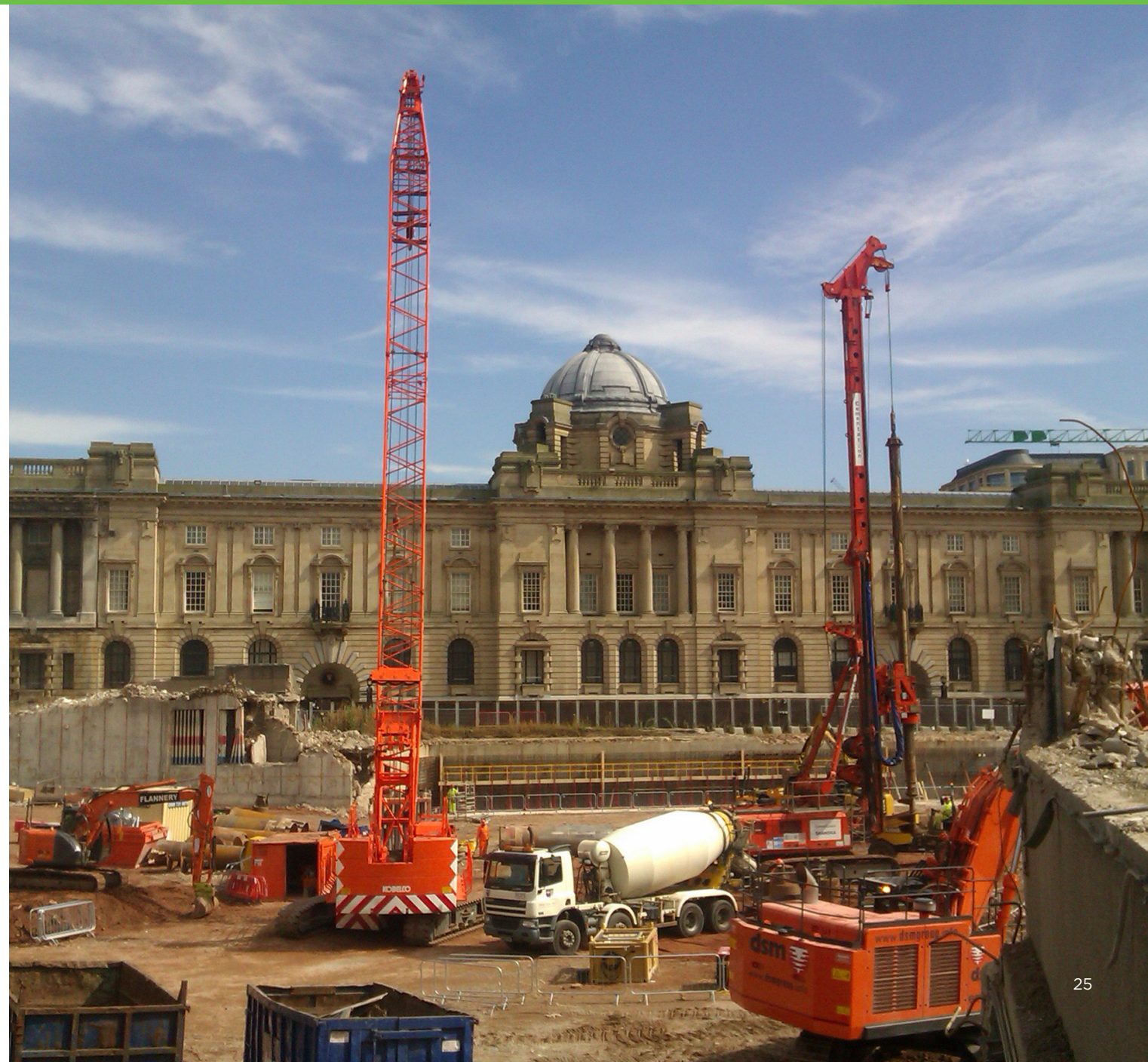
It will result in innovative ways of working such as:

- genuine **commitment to and evidence of co-design and co-production**, ensuring strategic interventions are owned by beneficiaries and done 'with', not 'to' them.
- **open data and data analytic platforms** – not just for public policy making

but providing an important resource for catalysing local business and community dynamism

- **the creation of urban rooms and neutral civic spaces** – further empowering those often excluded from anchor institution ‘deal-making’ and bureaucratic management

It will deliver a **wide range of activity**, from experimental and pilot projects, to public policy development and support, to demonstrator and scale-up initiatives designed around the needs of the place and its people.



CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

This review outlines how places need different and synergistic contributions from each of the universities in their geography. It provides a provocation that questions how radical and challenging a university is prepared to be as a civic role player. It then considers the case of five ULPs in English Cities along with three comparators in different place settings.



CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

The review's main lesson is that there is a coherent, broadly-based set of interventions that places need from their universities if they are to progress inclusive future growth effectively. This will not be delivered by the current portfolio of strategies and programmes being developed by Government and partners for place-based development in England. Nor is it likely, in these turbulent and challenging times, for there to be sufficient resources available locally to support it.

There are without doubt impending challenges facing place-based leadership teams, whom analysis shows have variable cohesion and trust, and are operating in places with wide disparities in performance and potential. Universities contributions to

these processes are similarly inconsistent and too often tend to be transactional, instrumental and based on a list of unconnected initiatives.

We wish to build on the learning from this review by inviting:



LOCAL LEADERSHIP TEAMS

to consider an Urban Living Framework approach of visioning and futures thinking, evidence and data analytics, in neutral spaces and settings, deploying innovative tools and techniques, to elaborate a range of interventions from experimental through to scale up.



UNIVERSITIES

to work collaboratively and synergistically in their geographies to champion and enable this approach.

This involves both mainstreaming inclusive future growth approaches within the anchor institutions AND supporting the agile, arms-length entities that can experiment and test new approaches and potential solutions.



GOVERNMENT

to support at a minimum a five-year funding programme at some scale for a breadth of metropolitan and

non-metropolitan demonstrators.

The findings of this review suggests this would add significant value to other place-based programmes, as well as having integrity in its own right as a mechanism to drive strategic and meaningful engagement between universities and their places in a tenacious pursuit of inclusive future growth.

References and further reading

References

The 'Wilson' Review of University-Business Collaboration

Encouraging a British Invention Revolution: Sir Andrew Witty's Review of Universities and Growth

The final report of the Civic University Commission

The final report of the Warwick Chancellor's Commission, 2016

Related studies and reports

UKRI review of the Urban Living Partnership pilots

Newcastle's System of Systems: The journey towards smart and innovative urban living

Universities, Cities and Communities: Co-Creating Urban Living Report

City Futures and the Civic University
Newcastle City Futures 2065

The New Civic University (University of Lincoln)

Thinking Ahead - Exploring the challenges and opportunities of the 21st Century (University of Lincoln)

Academic articles

Facilitating spaces for place-based leadership in centralised governance systems: the case of Newcastle City Futures

Wishful thinking? Towards a more realistic role for universities in regional innovation policy

Universities as anchor institutions in cities in a turbulent funding environment: vulnerable institutions and vulnerable places in England

From Geddes' city museum to Farrell's urban room: past, present, and future at the Newcastle City Futures exhibition

Let's draw and talk about urban change: Deploying digital technology to encourage citizen participation in urban planning

Health, cities and planning: using universities to achieve place innovation

